

*South Africa:*

## **New cultivar excels on Eastern Cape citrus farm**

The Roberts family planted the first citrus trees on the original Baddaford farm in the Eastern Cape, in 1903. In 1908, the farm exported the first fruits. Baddaford farm amalgamated with Riverside, owned by the Painter family, in the 1990s, and has been a citrus farm since then in the Kat River Valley. Errol Hewson is the director of Riverside Kat River Farm of the Lona Group, which produces around 14 000t of citrus yearly.



Lona Group purchased Riverside and surrounding farms in 2012 after becoming a shareholder in 2004, and has been implementing a rejuvenation process since then. The program has two important focus areas: cultivar selection and water management for quality fruit. “We’re building Riverside into a leading soft citrus, orange and lemon producer in the Eastern Cape,” says Hewson.

When Hewson joined the farm in 2015, it was planted to Satsumas, Clementines, navels, lemons, and Nadorcott mandarins. There were also 6 hectares planted to Orri, a late-ripening mandarin variety developed in Israel.

The Orri now play an important role in our long-term plans for the development of the farm. Orri is a vigorous grower and produces fruit with very good taste and internal quality. Orri trees are hardy, and resistant to *Alternaria* and citrus black spot. There have been reports from Florida in the US that Orri is also showing signs of resistance to citrus greening.

Source: [farmersweekly.co.za](https://farmersweekly.co.za)

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